

OREGON WILD

Winter Spring 2022 Volume 49, Number 1



LET THEM GROW

Also: A watershed moment for private forests



Working to protect and restore Oregon's wildlands, wildlife, and waters as an enduring legacy for future generations.

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The good, bad, and ugly of Biden's first year {4-5}

"Let Giants Grow" {7-9}

Agreement reached on forest water protections {10-11}



SAGE BROWN Willamette National Forest.



From the Director's Desk

Every tool in the toolbox

Sean Stevens, Executive Director

of new Wild & Scenic Rivers. The legislation gets its name from the thousands of Oregonians (many urged on by Oregon Wild) who nominated rivers for protection. Tools used: grassroots organizing and legislation.

Of course, sometimes federal agencies like the United States Forest Service just don't listen. While we treat it as an option of last resort, Oregon Wild doesn't hesitate to take the government to court to enforce environmental laws. We've won multiple cases this year to defend forests and wildlife habitat – from the

Ochoco National Forest to BLM lands outside of Springfield. Tools used: watchdogging and litigation.

When the courts aren't helpful and legislators aren't listening, you have to go straight to the voters. In 2020, Oregon Wild and allies geared up to head to the ballot to modernize Oregon's forest practice laws. The threat of losing at the ballot prompted the logging industry to come to the table to negotiate changes to the law. Knowing the uncertainties ahead, but not afraid of the hard work inherent in a mediation, we

dug into 10 months of heated negotiations. In late October, the Governor announced a sweeping agreement to overhaul the Oregon Forest Practices Act (more details on page 10-11). Tools used: direct democracy and negotiation.

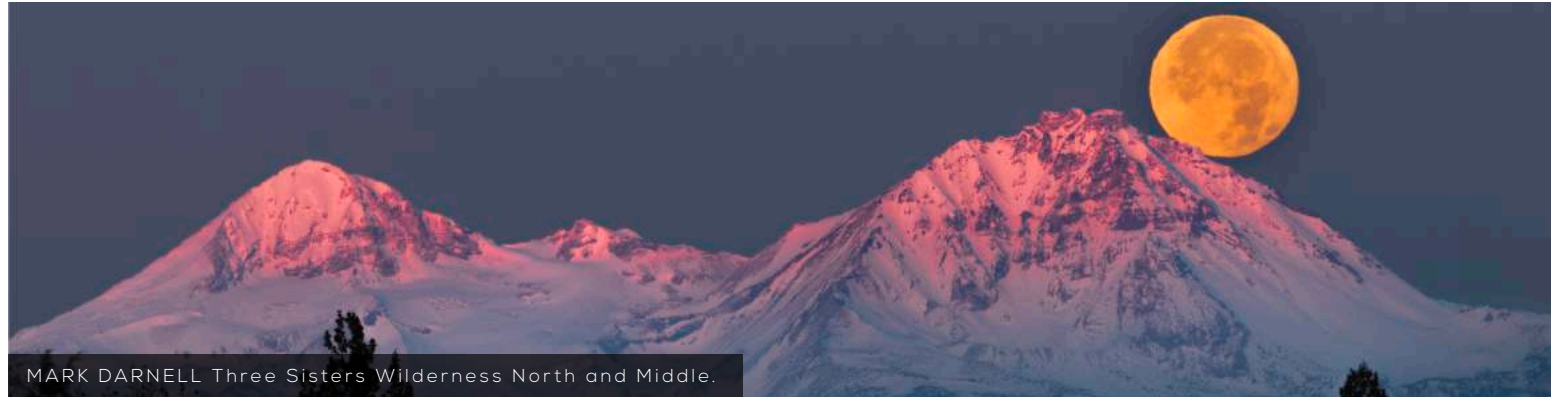
We also know that we can't do any of this alone. We're stronger when we work together. That's why Oregon Wild has spent years building and leading coalitions. The Forest Waters Coalition, the Pacific Northwest Forest Climate Alliance, the Oregon Climate Action Plan

Coalition, and the Oregon Wildlife Coalition are just a few of the groups that we support or lead to make sure our collective voice is amplified. Tools used: teamwork and people power.

For 48 years, Oregon Wild has put our collective values at the center of our work and pursued every avenue to achieve our goals. We're proud of what we have accomplished and honored to have your support in the fight to keep Oregon wild.

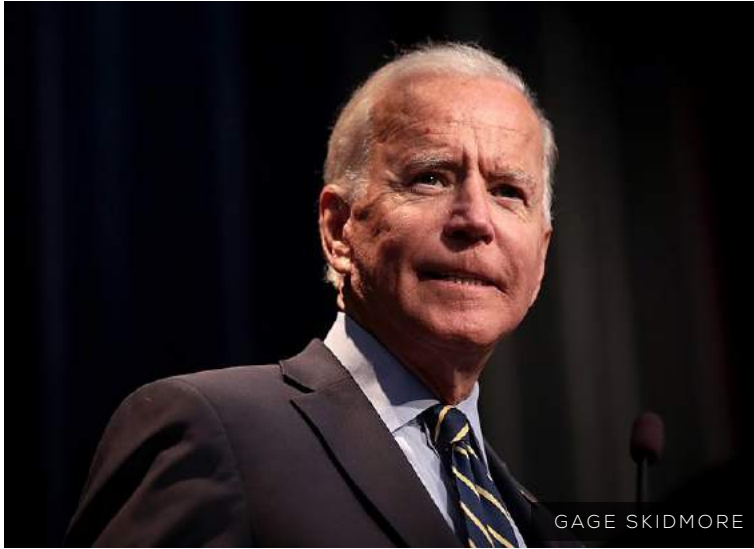
Working at Oregon Wild, I find that I never have the same problem. The reason is simple – we use every tool in the toolbox to protect and defend Oregon's wild spaces and wildlife. It's one of the hallmarks of our organization and a huge part of our success over the years – and 2021 has been no different.

In February, Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley introduced the River Democracy Act to protect nearly 4,700 miles



Biden's First Year – The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

Steve Pedery, Conversation Director



President Joe Biden was elected just a year ago after a campaign where he promised to end a deadly pandemic, restore competence to the US government, and tackle climate change (among many, many other things). One year in, his performance on environmental issues in the Pacific Northwest is mixed.

The Good

Forests and Climate - In a break from his predecessor, Biden has fully acknowledged the climate emergency facing the planet, and climate has driven many of his early decisions. One of the most significant was his June decision to halt old-growth logging and protect the roadless areas of the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska. In explaining

the decision, the administration pointed to the role mature and old-growth trees of temperate rainforests play in capturing and storing carbon.

Northern Spotted Owl Habitat - Among the Trump administration's many attacks on Oregon's environment, their decision to open 3.4 million acres of designated critical habitat for endangered northern spotted owls to logging stands out as one of the worst. In July, the Biden administration reversed this decision. It wasn't a complete victory--some 200,000 acres of formerly protected critical habitat were still opened to logging.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) restored - NEPA is the most important environmental law most people have never heard of. It lays out the process that federal agencies have to follow when evaluating and minimizing the environmental impacts of a significant activity, from logging sales to oil and gas development. In 2020, the Trump

administration gutted rules on NEPA implementation in the biggest giveaway to polluters in 40 years. In October of 2021, Biden reversed those changes and announced plans to strengthen NEPA rules in the future.

The Bad

Forests and Climate - The Biden administration's decision to protect carbon-rich temperate rainforests in Southeast Alaska was important, but thus far it has failed to protect similar forests in

Oregon. Oregon Wild, together with a coalition of local, regional, and national groups, is continuing to press Biden on the issue.

30x30 and Public Land Protection - Wildlife advocates working to address the global extinction crisis celebrated when President Biden embraced the concept of 30x30--protecting 30% of America's landscape from development by 2030. Unfortunately, his early promises have so far not led to any concrete proposals.





Wolves - Efforts to reinstate wolf protections across the country remain a mixed bag. On the one hand, the Biden administration continues to uphold in court the Trump delisting rule which removed protections for wolves in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Montana, as well as the western regions of Oregon and Washington. On the other hand, they have initiated a status review for wolves in the West (which would impact wolves in eastern Oregon) as a direct

result of the aggressive trophy hunts in Idaho and Montana that put the species' recovery in jeopardy.

The Ugly

The Trump Screens and Eastern Oregon Forests - In its waning days, the Trump administration and Forest Service rushed through changes to 25-year-old protections for large and old-growth trees on public lands in Eastern Oregon.

The rules, known collectively as the East Side Screens, included a provision requiring the Forest Service to generally protect the largest and oldest trees on the landscape. The new rules greatly weakened those standards. So far, the Biden administration has failed to revisit the issue and restore protections for big trees.

Mature and Old-Growth Logging - Despite mounting scientific research demonstrating that restoring and protecting old-growth forests is a key strategy for storing carbon, under Biden the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have both continued to log those forests in Oregon. One such project, the Flat Country logging sale east of Eugene, has generated national media headlines and condemnation from prominent scientists. It is hard to square Biden's public pronouncements on climate change and protecting forests internationally with this treatment of old-growth on public lands in Oregon. ©

DANIEL HOWLAND Little Sandy River



Unrelenting Advocacy

Jonathan Jelen, Development Director

Stopping unprecedented environmental rollbacks and advancing bold, visionary reforms all requires steady, unrelenting advocacy.

As we've seen in the first year of the Biden administration, things are better. No doubt. But let's face it, being an improvement on the Trump administration when it comes to the environment is the lowest of low bars. And it's been far from rainbows and unicorns.

We still have a long way to go if we're to effectively combat

climate change and halt the extinction crisis. And time is running out!

Oregon Wild members allow us to be relentless – to stop bad proposals in their tracks and continually push forward the dramatic, sweeping changes that we, our wildlife, and our planet desperately need.

As you're thinking through your year-end giving this season, please consider a special gift to Oregon Wild.

We promise to be absolutely relentless with it.



Let G R O

Lauren Anderson,
Forest Climate Policy Coordinator

It's been a busy few months for Oregon's forests and the fight against climate change! As you know, Oregon's forests are a world champion when it comes to sequestering and storing carbon on the landscape. Our temperate rainforests store more carbon per acre than the Amazon, and offer an incredible array of other benefits, including clean drinking water and habitat for at-risk wildlife. It has been a challenge to get policy makers at the state and federal levels to recognize that our mature and old-growth forests are worth more standing, but we have finally begun to see progress on both fronts.

giants W

On November 3rd, the Oregon Board of Forestry approved the first ever Climate Change and Carbon Plan (CCCP). Some of the the plans most promising recommendations include:

- Longer logging rotations (on state and private lands);
- Incentivizing climate-smart practices for private landowners;
- Shaping forest policies through the lens of social justice and equity;
- Revising the Oregon Forest Practices Act to better prioritize climate change;
- Identifying areas that have high carbon storage potential, and establishing priorities for these areas that include long-term carbon storage; and
- Establishing an Internal Carbon Pricing Process and using this to inform future

forest management planning and decisions.

In the past, the Board of Forestry and Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) have been slow to modernize their approach. But for the first time in the history of ODF, the Board has a Chair and a majority of members that really recognize the full array of values our forests offer. Instead of putting logging interests first, the Board voted unanimously to approve the CCCP and tackle the threat of climate change and use our forests as the natural climate solutions they are. With new leadership in State Forester Cal Mukumoto, we are hopeful that ODF will take bold action to transform itself into a national leader in climate-smart forestry. This relatively rapid progress at ODF is due in large part to the engagement and activism of our members and supporters - so thank you and please keep up the good work! Your letters, petitions, and testimony are making a big difference.

Also, in September the Oregon Global Warming Commission (OGWC) finalized its Natural Working Lands Proposal, setting the first ever sequestration goal for the state. The centerpiece was

focused on an outcome-based goal to “sequester at least an additional 5 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMTCO₂e) per year in Oregon’s natural and working lands and waters by 2030, and at least 9.5 MMTCO₂e per year by 2050 relative to a 2010 to 2019 activity-based, business-as-usual net carbon sequestration baseline.” This goal represents a major step forward in recognizing the potential to use our forests as natural climate solutions.

Oregon Wild is encouraged by the progress we have won this year, but we have a long road ahead to see these initiatives over the finish line, and we will look to you to ensure that these important issues continue to stay front and center of state conversations to address the climate crisis.

On the federal side of things, progress has been slower, but still significant. At the end of October, we helped lead a letter from over 130 environmental organizations to the Biden administration calling on him to take bold action to protect our country’s last remaining mature and old-growth as a critical climate solution. This level of

engagement and unity around these efforts is significant, and will help ensure this topic makes it onto the desks of decision makers in Washington, DC.



Congressman Earl Blumenauer, Congressman Peter DeFazio, and Senator Ron Wyden also led a letter to the US Department of Agriculture (which oversees the Forest Service) calling on the agency to update its current Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan to include conserving mature and old-growth forests as a critical climate solution. As written, the plan is overly focused on

thinning forests to reduce wildfire risk and makes no mention of also preserving our essential carbon reservoirs. This leadership, combined with the hundreds of you who stepped up to submit comments to USDA, will ensure our issues cannot be ignored.

It has been clear to those of us working on mature and old-growth protections at the federal level that there is still a lot of work to do. At the United Nations climate summit that was held in Glasgow, Scotland at the beginning of November, President Biden joined a 100-country pledge to halt deforestation by the end of the decade. But at the same time, federal agencies are still logging mature and old-growth forests on federal lands. We must continue to work hard to bridge this divide.

Thank you so much for all you do to support our work on forests and climate change, we could not have made this much progress without you. Onward! ☺

Take Action!

Send a message to the
White House
<https://bit.ly/LetForestsGrow>

Climate-smart forests

Policy recommendation across Oregon

Oregon

State forest lands

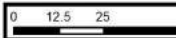
- Remaining old trees should be protected permanently in state forests, and the Oregon Department of Forestry should lengthen logging rotations to 80+ years, increase riparian buffers, increase green tree retention, and limit steep slope logging in younger stands.

Private industrial forest lands

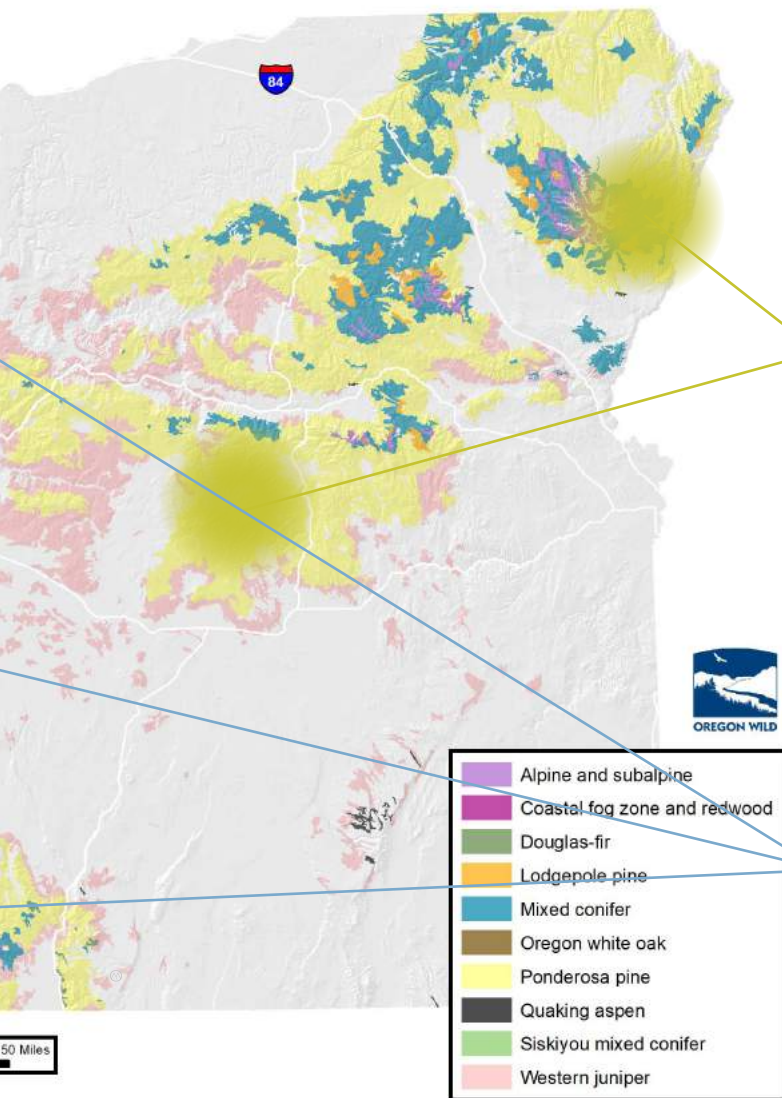
- Ensure much stricter rules for safeguarding forested watersheds for rural communities: Conserve mature trees, lengthen logging rotations to 80+ years, increase riparian buffers, reduce clearcutting, and limit steep slope logging.

O&C BLM lands

- Restore Northwest Forest Plan protections for public forests managed by the BLM.
- Permanently protect remaining mature and old-growth forests.
- Restore degraded forest land to enhance and restore old-growth characteristics.



Forests



Eastside federal forests

- Reinstatement of the 21-inch Rule and the Eastside Screens to safeguard the largest trees that store the vast majority of the landscape's carbon.
- Restore forests that have been degraded by past logging, fire suppression, and cattle grazing. This may include ecologically appropriate thinning and prescribed fire in some areas.
- Areas with late-successional and old-growth trees, and roadless areas, should be permanently closed to commercial logging.

Westside federal forests

- Permanently protect remaining mature and old-growth (80+ years old) in these carbon-rich forests. Create a strategic carbon reserve system that includes all remaining mature and old-growth forests on federal lands.
- Strengthen and maintain the Northwest Forest Plan's Late Successional (old-growth) reserve program and protect habitat for old-growth dwelling fish and wildlife. Ensuring connectivity between high-quality habitat areas should be a priority.
- Conserve all areas identified as habitat for northern spotted owls.

The Private Forest Accord reaches a watershed moment

Sean Stevens, Executive Director

The Halloween weekend of 2021 will always be a memorable one for me. On Saturday, October 30 at one in the morning - after a marathon week of negotiations between conservation organizations and the logging industry - I signed my name to a “term sheet” agreeing to the most substantive overhaul of the Oregon Forest Practices Act since it was originally created in 1971.

We will have much more to say about the Private Forest Accord agreement in the coming months and the public will have plenty of opportunity to weigh in as legislation then rulemaking then the NEPA process for a Habitat Conservation Plan are all seen to fruition. For now, we wanted to make sure that Oregon Wild supporters understood some of the ways that the Private Forest Accord package represents a



Every no cut stream buffer in Oregon will be significantly larger under the Private Forest Accord, with non-fish perennial streams getting their first ever buffers.

monumental upgrade from existing OFPA laws and rules (see the table the facing page).

I also want to personally and organizationally thank so many dedicated individuals, communities, and organizations who have been a part of this effort over the decades. I was acutely aware of the responsibility I carried to get the best deal possible for Oregon's endangered salmon, other species at risk, and communities that neighbor industrial forest lands. You all were sitting on my

shoulder - the good angels whispering in my ear. There is so much work ahead, but the Private Forest Accord represents a brand new foundation for how the ecological values on Oregon's 10 million acres of private forestlands will be safeguarded in the future.

You can find more details on the Private Forest Accord on the Oregon WildBlog [\[url?\]](#) ☺

PRIVATE FOREST ACCORD VS STATUS QUO OFPA

Riparian and Steep Slopes Protections

TOPIC	SUBTOPIC	CURRENT	PRIVATE FOREST ACCORD
RIPARIAN	fish (large)	100 ft management zone 20 ft no cut	110 ft no cut
	fish (medium)	70 (F) -80 (SSBT) 20 ft no cut (as applied appx 45 ft no cut)	110 ft no cut
	fish (small)	50 (F) -60 (SSBT) ft 20 ft no cut (as applied appx. 25 ft no cut)	100 ft no cut
	Non Fish L/M Perennial	Large (70 ft) 20 ft no cut Medium (50 ft) 20 ft no cut	75 ft no cut
	Non Fish Small Perennial	0-10 ft (generally zero in coast range)	75 ft no cut
	Non Fish Small Perennial	0-10 ft (generally zero in coast range)	75 ft no cut first 500' and 50 ft no cut next 650' (for Np feeding SSBT) 75 ft no cut for 600' (for Np feeding non-SSBT F)
SLOPES	Initiation Sites	No protections for fish streams	Prioritizing protections for top 33% sediment volume initiation sites within top 20% debris traversal basins
	Debris Torrent Traversal	Generally no protections	25 ft no cut for top 50% most likely to be traversed
ROADS	Inventory and Updates	No inventory requirement	A new Forest Roads Inventory and Assessment to require updates and removal of all fish passage barriers on 20-year timeline
	Stream Crossings	50-year flood standard	Increases culvert sizing to 100-year flood standard with stream simulation
SMALL FORESTLAND OWNERS	ODF Support	Limited staff and no dedicated SFO office	A new SFO office with nearly 20 dedicated support staff
FUNDING	Mitigation \$\$	No direct financial support for off-site mitigation	\$15 million per year (\$5 million from industry and \$10 million from the state) to fund riparian restoration, land protection, and instream flow protection

Growing support for Wild & Scenic Rivers

Jamie Dawson, Public Lands Campaigner

Before I started working for Oregon Wild, I spent my time teaching young people and adults about the natural world. From the trail to the classroom, we'd spend time looking at things like bones and bugs trying to piece together planet earth and our place in it.

Like all educators, I always hoped that one day the students I worked with would take that knowledge and do something good with it. After all, the old adage states that we'll only conserve what we love, and my aspiration was that our time together would help students

develop a strong sense of place and a steadfast commitment to speak up for it. It's a special moment when teachers get to witness the fruits of their labors.

Recently, I got to see just what happens when those seeds sprout. On November 9th, students of varying ages, local business owners, and river lovers from across Deschutes County gathered in Bend with Senator Ron Wyden to celebrate the mountain of support accumulating for the River Democracy Act, visionary legislation that would designate

and protect thousands of miles of Wild & Scenic Rivers. Several students spoke from the heart about protecting Oregon's waterways, and even though I didn't know them personally, I was so proud of them. Their connection to place was undeniable, and I couldn't help but smile.

The place where this event was held was particularly special: Tumalo Creek. The students I met said it's a place where they go hiking with their families and that they study the creek in their science classes. They know this place, and that's why they nominated it to be included in Senator Wyden's bill. When you think about all the people across the state who have that kind of relationship with a place, it's no wonder the River Democracy Act is so broadly supported.

This has also been clear in recent weeks' newspapers. I was delighted to see breweries, guiding companies, and outdoor gear businesses broadcasting their



support for this bill through advertisements, like one in my local Bend Bulletin, making it clear that this bill is good for their businesses and for our communities.

As excitement for the River Democracy Act continues to grow, I sincerely hope that there will be an opportunity this session to pass it through Congress. You can help make that a reality by becoming a Citizen Co-sponsor of the bill on oregonwild.org and by submitting a supportive Letter to the Editor to your local paper. Contact me at jd@oregonwild.org if you want to pitch in! ☺



Daniel
Howland
Volunteer Spotlight

Our work wouldn't be possible without the incredible individuals from all over the state who step up to make a difference. Thank you for your efforts in helping keep Oregon wild.

Deserving of special recognition is the contribution of Daniel Howland, a volunteer who has traveled over 2000 miles in the last year taking hundreds of photographs of wild rivers, old-growth logging, and even documenting a wildlife project with our friends at Rogue Detection Teams. These photos help capture and share the story of the landscape we're all working to protect. Thank you, Daniel!



Wyden speaking with Bend students about protecting Tumalo Creek

A New Chapter for Sea Otter Reintroduction on the Oregon Coast

Danielle Moser and Ally Fisher, the Wildlife Team

The story of sea otters in Oregon is a tumultuous one. Sea otters were present along the Oregon coast for over ten thousand years before European traders and settlers. Maritime fur traders that began to arrive in the early 18th century hunted sea otters for their pelts drove a rapid decline of the population. In 1910, the last known native sea otter was killed. The loss of the species was (and is) felt by tribes in the Pacific Northwest who have had a connection to the sea otter since time immemorial. Their disappearance also left a void in the coastal ecosystem.

But at long last, there is hope for the return of this beloved species. The Elakha Alliance, a coalition of tribal, non-profit, and conservation leaders, has been pursuing a possible reintroduction of sea otters to the Oregon coast. The first step in this process is conducting a feasibility study, backed by a team of scientists, investigating if reintroduction is viable and outlining the many

considerations that would be involved in the project.

The initial draft of the study arrived recently with good news: with careful planning and proper reintroduction, sea otters are likely

to make a successful comeback! Not only that, but their return will have many other benefits such as increasing carbon capture and overall biodiversity.

Additionally, the study covers a variety of topics, from habitat suitability and ecosystem effects of sea otters, to political, legal, economic, and social considerations with the overall goal being to restore the



ecological functions provided by the species and repair the relationship between sea otters and people along the coast.

A big thank you to Oregon Wild supporters! Because of your generosity, we were able to help fund the study and move closer to having our favorite fuzzy mammals back on the Oregon coast. The study, set to be completed in January 2022, will lay the foundation for further conversations with partners, state and federal agencies, stakeholders, and others about the next steps toward reintroduction.

Take Action!

If you're interested in learning more, tune in on February 2nd for our webcast about sea otters and the feasibility study with a special guest from the Elakha Alliance:
<https://bit.ly/OROtters>

Of forests and faucets

Samantha Krop, Forest Waters Coalition Coordinator

The recent Private Forest Accord secured significant expansions in protections for our forested waterways (pages 8-9), but we still need our state agencies to take a much more active role in protecting our drinking water.

Hundreds of stream segments across Oregon are listed under the Clean Water Act as impaired, which means they are polluted or degraded in some way and in need of protection. Oregonians are demanding we do better for our communities.

Recently, the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) entered into an agreement for how they plan to work together to improve water quality in our state. Disappointingly, the new Memorandum of Understanding does not go nearly far enough to ensure water is protected on forest lands.

Rather than lay out material steps towards improving Oregon's water quality, the plan includes no concrete timelines or enforceable processes for holding agencies accountable if they fail to take action.

Decades of DEQ deferring to ODF the responsibility to protect clean water has led to the mess we are in.

This is why the Forest Waters Coalition submitted comments to the two agencies both highlighting the shortcomings of their plan and calling on them to update our state's forest management practices to better protect our drinking water supplies. Oregon DEQ has the power to act, they just need the political will!

Industrial logging practices degrade water quality and, if allowed to continue at the current rate and scale, will contribute to drought and water insecurity in a future of climate

change. We've already seen the dire impacts for some communities.

Rockaway Beach, Corbett, and so many others have paid dearly in costly upgrades to their drinking water treatment systems after extensive logging in their community watersheds.

Many

communities are looking at the same fate in the very near term if actions are not taken soon to better protect Oregon's drinking water systems.



FOREST WATERS

Forest Waters Coalition members have been meeting with legislators, showing up to agency meetings, and raising our voices in defense of drinking water. Stay tuned for upcoming action opportunities and ways to get involved in this work! ☺

Take action!



Watch this heartbreaking video of how the small town of Rhododendron fought to protect their drinking watershed: bit.ly/RWAVideo

Read more about the shortcomings of the DEQ/ODF clean water agreement: <https://bit.ly/ForestWatersMOU>

Member Spotlight: Mark Becker

Anastasia Kuznetsova & Wren Wells



“Our house in Sisters, Oregon is overrun with turkeys and deer, but what’s missing are the apex predators. It’s an ecosystem that’s out of balance,” says Mark.

Inspired not only by his admiration for wolves but also his desire to see the rewilding of Oregon, Mark supports Oregon Wild’s work as an Evergreen Society member with a monthly donation. As a retired corporate business attorney who is personally familiar with the legislative landscape, Mark recognizes Oregon Wild’s role as an advocacy organization and the credibility it carries within the state legislature. “A lot of folks don’t know what’s going on behind the scenes, and environmental issues just don’t bubble up for them.

Long-time Oregon resident Mark Becker knows the importance of maintaining healthy and balanced ecosystems. While reading an article about wolf restoration in Yellowstone National Park, Mark noticed a reference to Oregon. Curious to dig deeper into this apex predator’s presence in his home of over thirty years, he came across Oregon Wild. By supporting Oregon Wild, Mark wants to bring light to the issues of rewilding and rebuilding our local ecological communities.

When you’re fighting moneyed interests that are very focused on getting their way, you have to fight fire with fire. That’s what Oregon Wild brings to the game.”

Supporters like Mark are a huge reason that Oregon Wild is in the game and up to bat for issues like wolf awareness, climate action, and protecting old-growth forests and waters, to name a few. As an Evergreen Society member, Mark personally funds the important work of protecting Oregon and its native species. Thank you, Mark!

Evergreen Society members support Oregon Wild’s critical work with a recurring monthly donation. Visit www.oregonwild.org/about/donate to learn more and join! ☺

What’s the next generation’s favorite wild place?

Jonathan Jelen, Development Director

Recently, we’ve asked many of our supporters, “What’s your favorite wild place in Oregon?”

The responses have been as varied as the Oregon landscape itself - the Columbia River Gorge, Three Sisters, Drift Creek Wilderness, and Waldo Lake all have their share of fans.

But one common thread is the magical, breathtaking feeling of that first experience in what would become your favorite place.

As we turn the calendar to 2022, please consider including Oregon Wild in your planned giving to take care of who (and what) you love - and to give the next generation the chance to discover their favorite wild place for the very first time.

We’ve partnered with FreeWill to offer Oregon Wild supporters a free, easy tool to set up your planned giving at: www.freewill.com/oregonwild

Questions? Contact Jonathan Jelen at jj@oregonwild.org



JAMES PARSONS Three Fingered Jack



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TOP 5 CONSERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF 2021

All made possible by Oregon Wild members

Advanced a once-in-a-generation campaign to expand Wild & Scenic River protections to 4,700 miles of Oregon's waterways and two million acres of public lands



1

Expanded campaigns at the state, regional, and national level to ensure that mature and old-growth forest protections are included in climate solution policies



2

Continued to be a vigilant watchdog by monitoring over 120 proposed projects across our public lands



3

4

5



Reached an historic agreement to significantly modernize logging practices and increase protections for fish, wildlife, and watersheds on ten million acres of private forestlands



Secured state endangered species act protections for marbled murrelets, while supporting reintroduction efforts for condors and sea otters -- and going to court to relist gray wolves under the Endangered Species Act